



**UPDATE 2004**

# The Missouri Assessment Program

## **Knowledge + Performance = Academic Success**

During the spring of 1997, Missouri began implementing a performance-based assessment system for use by all public schools in the state, as required by the Outstanding Schools Act of 1993. The assessment system, known as MAP (Missouri Assessment Program), is designed to measure student progress in meeting the Show-Me Standards. The 73 Show-Me Standards, created by Missouri educators and adopted by the State Board of Education in 1996, describe what graduates of the state's public schools must *know* and *do*. To achieve the Show-Me Standards, students must have a strong foundation of knowledge and skills in basic subject areas *and* be able to apply what they know to real-world problems and new situations.

## **Subject Areas**

Initially, the Missouri Assessment Program covered all six areas addressed in the Show-Me Standards: mathematics, communication arts, science, social studies, health/physical education, and fine arts. However, budget cuts in recent years forced the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to suspend assessment in health/physical education and fine arts. Now the Department requires school districts to administer only the communication arts and mathematics tests, although the agency offers the science and social studies assessments on a voluntary basis.

## **The Tests**

The MAP assessments incorporate three types of test questions in order to evaluate student achievement: the familiar multiple-choice questions that require students to select the correct answer; short-answer, constructed-response items that require students to supply (rather than select) an appropriate response; and performance events that require students to work through more complicated problems or issues.

The current MAP assessments are grade-span tests. This means, for example, that schools administer the MAP elementary mathematics assessment at grade 4, the middle-school mathematics assessment at grade 8, and the high-school mathematics assessment at grade 10. However, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) requires all states to annually assess student learning in reading/language arts and mathematics at grades 3-8 and also at a high-school grade by the 2005-06 school year (as well as to annually assess student learning in science using grade-span tests by the 2007-08 school year). So, the Department is now developing communication arts and mathematics grade-level tests as well as refining existing communication arts, mathematics and science assessments to comply with NCLB requirements.

## **Developing and Scoring the Assessments**

The Department continues to involve large numbers of Missouri teachers, administrators and content specialists in the MAP-development process. As an integral part of test development, Missouri educators write and pilot MAP items. This process provides Missouri educators the opportunity to review student responses and make necessary revisions before DESE conducts field tests of the items.

In addition to playing an essential role in the development process, highly-trained Missouri educators also score students' responses to MAP items. In the summer of 2003, over 400 Missouri educators scored items at nine sites across the state, and we anticipate the same number of teachers will participate in the scoring process in the summer of 2004.

## Report Forms

The MAP assessments yield data about the academic achievement of individual students as well as groups of students. MAP results include a national percentile rank, derived from performance on the multiple-choice portion of the assessment, which helps districts, teachers and parents determine how well their students are achieving in relation to students across the nation. In addition, the MAP achievement levels provide information about students' progress toward the Show-Me Standards. Each level of achievement—Step 1, Progressing, Nearing Proficiency, Proficient or Advanced—has accompanying descriptors that articulate the types of skills associated with success at that particular performance standard. Each student also receives a percent-correct score on items related to specific Show-Me Standards, which is helpful to teachers in identifying academic strengths and weaknesses.

## The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

As noted, new federal legislation (NCLB) requires that, by the 2005-06 school year, states must measure every child's progress in reading/language arts and mathematics every year in grades 3-8 and at least once during grades 10-12. The Department will use the communication arts and mathematics assessments in their current form in 2004 and 2005 before modifying them in 2006. By school year 2007-2008, states must also have in place science assessments to be administered at least once during grades 3-5, grades 6-9 and grades 10-12.

## What's Ahead

The following chart shows the projected assessment schedule by subject area through 2008. The Department developed this schedule in accordance with the requirements of NCLB. *Note: The science and social studies assessments are voluntary for school districts in 2004. The status of state funding for these subjects in 2005 is not known.*

		Years				
		2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Subject Areas	Communication Arts	3, 7, 11	3, 7, 11	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11
	Math	4, 8, 10	4, 8, 10	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10
	Science	3, 7, 10	3, 7, 10	3, 7, 10 *	3, 7, 10 *	3, 7, 10 *
	Social Studies	4, 8, 11	4, 8, 11	4, 8, 11 *	4, 8, 11 *	4, 8, 11 *
	MAP-Alternate	4, 8, 11	4, 8, 11	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11

\* The grade placements for science and social studies assessments in 2006 and beyond are scheduled for review.

## Testing Students with Disabilities (MAP - A)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), as revised by Congress in 1997, required Missouri to develop an alternate to the statewide assessment for students whose disabilities are so severe they are not able to participate in the regular MAP testing. Thus, the Department developed the MAP-A (MAP Alternate) to allow severely disabled students to participate in the MAP. Through systematic procedures, teachers document students' progress toward their IEP (Individual Education Plan) goals and related Show-Me Standards, and trained scorers evaluate the results. Like the MAP, the MAP-A is currently used at grade spans, but it is being redesigned and expanded to include grade-level assessments to meet NCLB requirements.

### For more information, contact:

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